

# **COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING DIVISION**

*"Promoting Healthy, Safe and  
Supportive Community Care"*

## **CHOOSING NON-MEDICAL OUT-OF-HOME CARE FOR SENIORS IN CALIFORNIA**

### **A CONSUMER GUIDE**



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## **A CONSUMER GUIDE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In order to make an informed choice when selecting non-medical out of home care you must first know what type of facility is appropriate for the level and types of care you and/or your loved one requires.

In California, out of home care is provided both in facilities licensed to provide health care such as skilled nursing facilities and in those licensed to provide non-medical care such as Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs), including those with a certificate of authority to provide life care.

If you or your loved one needs 24 hour skilled nursing care, contact the California Department of Health Services for assistance in locating a skilled nursing facility. You may contact them at (916) 445-4171 or locate a regional office contact through their web address: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/>.

If you or your loved one needs licensed non-medical community care then this Guide is for you. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) is responsible for the licensure and oversight of Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly and Adult Day Programs (ADPs) in California. This authority comes from the California Health and Safety Code and the California Code of Regulations, Title 22. CCLD has field offices throughout the State that provide local service to specific geographic areas. For information about facilities in your area please refer to the CCLD website at: <http://ccl.dss.cahwnet.gov/>. The CDSS has prepared this Guide to provide a brief overview of the senior care facilities licensed by the CCLD and to assist you in choosing a facility that meets your needs.

### **FACILITY TYPES LICENSED BY THE CCLD:**

#### **RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY FOR THE ELDERLY (RCFE)**

RCFEs (sometimes referred to as “Assisted Living” or “Board and Care”) provide services to persons 60 years of age and over and persons under 60 with compatible needs. RCFEs provide care, supervision and assistance in areas such as medication management, food service and bathing. RCFEs additionally may accept and retain residents with conditions requiring incidental medical services when the residents can self-care for the condition or when the resident has outside help from a medical professional. Examples of conditions requiring incidental medical services include diabetes, incontinence, catheters and dementia care. RCFEs with Hospice Waivers may provide care to residents who are receiving hospice services. RCFEs range in capacity from six or less to over 800 residents.

## CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (CCRC)

CCRCs are RCFEs where services promised in a continuing care contract are provided. A continuing care contract is an agreement between a person 60 years or older and a continuing care provider. The contract includes a promise to provide a range of services at a CCRC for a period longer than one year in exchange for payment. Most continuing care contracts call for 1) Payment of entrance fee; and 2) Monthly fees. It is a promise to provide care, not method of payment, which defines a continuing care contract. A continuing care contract may consist of one or a series of agreements.

## ADULT DAY PROGRAMS FACILITY (ADP)

(2) "Adult day program" means any community-based facility or program that provides care to persons 18 years of age or older in need of personal services, supervision, or assistance essential for sustaining the activities of daily living or for the protection of these individuals on less than a 24-hour basis.

## WHAT IS A FACILITY LICENSE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The California Health and Safety Code requires any person or entity that provides care or supervision to non-relatives to obtain a license (with certain exceptions). Licensure helps protect the health and safety of persons who need care and/or supervision. The CCLD issues these licenses to facilities that meet the minimum conditions of licensure required in the Health and Safety Code and California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 6. The CCLD enforces facility compliance by conducting unannounced visits, complaint investigations, background checks, record reviews, and other quality controls. The CCLD also provides technical assistance to facility operators by means of consultation and information sharing. If a facility fails to maintain compliance with licensing standards, the CCLD has the authority to issue citations, assess civil penalties and/or revoke the license. When you are selecting a facility it is important to check for a license to be assured of the protection provided by law.

## STEP 1 IDENTIFY YOUR NEEDS

You should consider the unique preferences of you and/or your loved one when selecting a facility. Considerations other than cost include the following factors:

- Size            Facilities can range in size from those caring for less than six clients to those caring for hundreds of clients. The facility environment will be different depending on its capacity so you must decide the size that best suits you and/or your loved one's personality and interests.
- Location      Do you and/or your loved one need a facility close to family, or is proximity to long-time friends and/or physicians the primary factor?
- Services       Do you and/or your loved one have incidental medical needs or the need for dementia or hospice care? Are you and/or your loved one non-ambulatory? While all facilities are required to provide basic services, not all facilities are able to provide the specialized services

you may need or want.

## STEP 2 CHOOSE A SAMPLE OF FACILITIES TO CONSIDER

The California Department of Social Services' CCLD maintains a website for your convenience at: <http://ccl.dss.cahwnet.gov/>. This website includes a search tool to help users locate facilities in a geographic region

Additional Information you may find helpful at the CCLD website includes:

- *An overview of the CCLD program*
- *A description of licensed facility types*
- *A directory of local and regional CCLD offices*
- *CCLD regulations (California Code of Regulations, Title 22)*
- *CCLD procedures (Evaluator Manual)*

You may make an appointment to visit a CCLD office to review the public files on facilities that you are considering. The public file will contain all citations, civil penalties and administrative actions (if any) issued to the facility. It will also include the licensee's Program Description describing the specific services that the facility will provide.

You may want to review the CCLD regulations which apply to the facility type that you are considering. They also can be accessed at the CCLD website, providing you advance knowledge about services that facilities must provide.

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program in your local area can give you information about both skilled nursing facilities and community care facilities. Contact information for your local Ombudsman Program is available at:

[http://www.aging.state.ca.us/html/programs/ombudsman\\_contacts.html](http://www.aging.state.ca.us/html/programs/ombudsman_contacts.html)

## STEP 3 VISITING THE FACILITIES

It is very important for you to use your own judgement when you tour facilities, as you are the expert in your own needs and preferences and/or those of your loved one. Since you will have many things to do during your visit, you might organize your thoughts in advance. Important things to do during your visit include:

- 1) Look closely at the building and grounds
- 2) Talk to some facility residents
- 3) Talk to the facility administrator who is in charge of daily operations
- 4) Talk to some facility staff members
- 5) Ask to see a copy of the Admission Agreement
- 6) Ask to see the facility license
- 7) Ask about medication procedures and policies
- 9) Ask about the facility training program for staff

The CCLD has developed a checklist to assist you. It is a good idea to carry the checklist with you during your facility visits so you can make notes while looking around and talking to different people. Keep in mind that the facility may become your home or the home of your loved one. Take all the time you need to decide if this is a place where you or your loved one would want to live.

If you notice any problems during your visits to facilities, or suspect that a facility is operating without a license, this information should be reported to the CCLD as a complaint. Complainants may remain anonymous.

	Fac. #1		Fac. #2		Fac. #3	
<b><i>Buildings and Grounds...</i></b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are the facility grounds well kept?						
Is the inside of the building attractive and fresh smelling?						
Does the inside temperature seem comfortable?						

<b><i>Food Service...</i></b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is the kitchen clean and efficient looking?						
Is the dining area clean and attractive?						
Are sample menus available for your review?						
Do menus seem nutritious and well balanced?						
Are healthy snack foods available?						
Is there a dietician?						
Are special dietary needs met?						

**Living Quarters...**

Yes No Yes No Yes No

Are bedrooms neat and attractive?						
Is there adequate closet and storage space?						
Are the bathrooms clean and well maintained?						
Are adequate laundry and housekeeping services provided?						
Is there adequate privacy for residents?						

**Recreation Areas...**

Fac. #1	Fac. #2	Fac. #3
Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

Is there indoor and outdoor activity space for residents?						
Is there an attractive area to visit with friends or family?						
Is there a telephone available for residents to make personal calls?						

**About residents in care...**

Yes No Yes No Yes No

<b>What do residents have to say about activities offered?</b>						
Do residents look comfortable and well cared for?						
Are residents willing to answer your questions about the facility?						
Do residents you speak with seem to enjoy living at the facility?						

<b>About the staff...</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are staff members willing to answer your questions about the facility?						
Do staff members seem to enjoy working with the residents?						
Do staff members have adequate time to care for residents?						

<b>Costs and protections...</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you feel the facility's admission agreement meets your needs or the needs of your loved one?						
Is the cost of residing at the facility and the payment schedule clearly specified in the adm. agreement?						
Is information posted/available regarding resident/client rights, including the process for filing a complaint?						
Does the facility make provisions to safeguard the personal property and valuables of residents?						
<b>Medical / Safety Considerations...</b>	Fac.	#1	Fac.	#2	Fac.	#3
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Does staff assist residents with making and keeping medical and dental appointments?						
Is transportation to and from medical and dental appointments provided by the facility? Cost?						
Does the facility provide the specialized care you need, such as dementia care, hospice care and/or incidental medical care?						
Does the facility have a plan by which to respond to emergencies such as a fire or earthquake?						